

Faro de Punta Higuero
(Punta Higuero Light)
Punta Higuero
Puntas (barrio)
Rincon
Puerto Rico

HAER No. PR-21

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PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORIC AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Engineering Record
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HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

Faro de Punta Higuero
(Punta Higuero Light)

PR-21

Location: On Point Higuero, between Mayaguez and Aquadilla Bays. Puntas (barrio), Rincon, Puerto Rico
Position: 18° 21' 49" N - 67° 16' 15" W

Date of Erection: Original 1892; Rebuilt 1922

Present Owner: U.S. Department of Commerce
U.S. Coast Guard

Original Owner: Central Lighthouse Commission
Colonial Public Works Office
Harbor and Port Section
Government of Spain

Present Use: Lighthouse

Significance: In 1892 the original light was built as a fixed white 6th order station with a 6 mile range light beam. It was a singular piece of design and construction similar to Guanica Light. The most striking feature was the peculiar use of materials in the facades and tower. The light, as a result of the 1918 quake, was rebuilt in 1921 but demolished by the U.S.C.G. in 1922.

As originally built, it was a brick and stone rectangular dwelling --for one 2nd class keeper-- constructed around an exposed brick octagonal tower. Its Mediterrenean appearance came from an elaborate combination of exposed and indented brick work in the facades --around doors and windows-- and corners. The "castle" look was further emphasized by reddish stucco imitating stone-work on all facades and the very elaborate exposed brick cornice topped by a parapet built in lace-like brick-work. The tower followed the same style.

The original illuminating apparatus was a 4th order Bernard & Barbier 1892, lenticular lens with 50 cm. in diameter. The lens had 6 panels; 6 flashing panels in the central drum formed by 5 elements in each panel. It also had 6 prisms on each panel above the central drum and 3 below. The flashes were produced by the entire revolving

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lens activated by a clock work device. The cast-iron, copper, and glass lantern was approximately 2 mts. in diameter.

The evidence suggests that the lens was destroyed by the 1918 quake; nevertheless, the lantern and clock system were apparently moved to the new light in 1922: a reinforced-concrete cylindrical structure. This one is almost identical to Punta Borinquen but varies in dimensions. It has a 21 ft square 4 ft deep foundation reduced by four superimposed concentric belts to a 12 ft tower with an internal 10 ft diameter. It has 3 floors, watchroom, and lantern. A concrete stairway leads to each floor and a railed iron ladder to the lantern. It has a central hollow concrete shaft lined with galvanized iron for the old clock work cord. In 1933 the light was made automatic and left unattended.

The structures and dwelling which were also built in the 1920's were razed by a fire some years ago and severely damaged.

Originally built to connect the intermediate space left by Punta Borinquen and Cabo Rojo Lights. It incorporates some of the old light devices: lantern and sections of the rotating apparatus. The tower is the smallest of the two built by the U.S.C.G. in Puerto Rico.

Transmitted by:

Kevin Murphy, Historian HAER, August 1984; from the National Register Nomination prepared by Dr. Benjamin Nistal-Moret, August 1979.